

Tornado safety is a major issue for Alabama. Alabama is one of the three southern states that, per capita, lead the nation in the number of tornado-related fatalities. A tornado in Tuscaloosa County in December 2000 killed 12 people, including nine persons who lived in manufactured housing.

On December 3, 2003, President Bush signed into law my Tornado Shelters Act. This legislation allows local governments to use Community Development Block Grant funds to construct new storm shelters and improve existing ones in mobile home communities. While there were federal programs to help communities and individuals to build storm shelters or safe rooms for site-built homes, apartment buildings, and schools, the programs previously did not include mobile home communities. Now mobile home communities and residents are no longer excluded, which is important for the one in six Alabamians who live in manufactured housing.

With today's technology, we have the science to predict a severe storm, sometimes as much as a half hour before it arrives. For those in houses, which have an interior safe room or basement, this is a comforting fact and can be life-saving. For those in manufactured housing where there is no safe room or basement, we are building a growing number of storm shelters. These families also need an early warning system to give them time to seek shelter from the oncoming storm. For that reason, I am a lead sponsor of CJ's Home Protection Act, which requires all new manufactured housing to be equipped with NOAA Weather Radios. The cost of installing these radios is very small, but it will save lives.

[Issues Homepage](#)